

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

Hillsborough Arts Council Chairman Neil Stutzer  
nstutzer@hillsboroughartscouncil.org

Hillsborough Arts Council Treasurer Gail Cooley  
sculpture@HillsboroughArtsCouncil.org

Hillsborough Mayor Tom Stevens  
919-732-2104, ext. 1005 or tom.stevens@hillsboroughnc.org

Stickwork Sculpture Named and Ready for Exploration on Riverwalk

HILLSBOROUGH — The latest destination in Hillsborough is A Sight to Behold — a one-of-a-kind Stickwork sculpture along Hillsborough's Riverwalk.

The large-scale sapling sculpture officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Nov. 21. It was built by internationally acclaimed sculptor Patrick Dougherty and numerous volunteers along the Town of Hillsborough's greenway in a project commissioned by the Hillsborough Arts Council.

Dougherty revealed the name of sculpture at the ceremony, noting it emerged from a Southern colloquialism voiced by more than one passer-by over the three weeks that the artwork was being built: "Well, isn't that a sight to behold!"

"Magical, simply magical — "A Sight to Behold" is perfectly fitting for Riverwalk," Hillsborough Mayor Tom Stevens said.

The sculpture — built with three Hillsborough brush truck loads of Southern sugar maple, sweetgum and elm saplings — is located within a copse of trees near Riverwalk's downtown entrance, by the Eno River Parking Deck. Dougherty said he was inspired by the concept of a pleasure dome, as in poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem "Kubla Khan."

"I was thinking of an architectural folly in a mystical landscape," Dougherty said. "It features five small towers surrounding a central barrel. I gave the top of the central tower an oculus open to the natural world and the sky above when a visitor commented that it looked like 'nature's observatory.' The small towers are accessed through the center one but have windows that look out and frame the woods for viewers. All are connected by doorways to invite exploration."

The sculpture is Dougherty's 267<sup>th</sup> Stickwork sculpture. He creates the sculptures across the United States and around the world. The Hillsborough Arts Council is the smallest organization

to commission a Stickwork sculpture, and Hillsborough is the smallest town to have one. Depending on weather conditions, the sculpture will remain in place for two years.

“We knew the Stickwork sculpture would be marvelous, and now that it’s finished, it’s better than we ever imagined,” Hillsborough’s mayor said. “This public art is fun and wonderful for our citizens to enjoy — and is also an excellent investment for tourism. What a great example of nonprofits, lots of volunteers and local government working together to create something wonderful and distinctive for our community. Kudos to the artist, the Hillsborough Arts Council, the donors, the volunteers, and to our town employees for their contributions.”

The Arts Council raised \$26,000 for the project through 65 individual donations as well as grants of \$8,000 and \$1,500 from the Hillsborough Tourism Board and the Orange County Arts Commission. Sponsors were:

- Classical American Homes Preservation Trust and the Richard Hampton Jenrette Foundation for providing saplings for the project
- Downtown Merchants of Historic Hillsborough
- Edward Jones financial services firm, with Tom Struckmeyer as financial adviser
- Mike’s Art Truck
- Sports Endeavors
- Summit Design and Engineering Services
- Weaver Street Market

The Orange County Visitors Bureau also provided funding for a photographer, Donn Young, to document the project.

The project’s 190 confirmed volunteers helped gather saplings for the project from Ayr Mount Historic Site and from along sewer lines in the Waterstone development; strip leaves from saplings; construct the sculpture; check in volunteers each day; design graphics; plan events; develop public relations materials; track invitations; and help with a reception.

Volunteers came from Hillsborough as well as the town’s surrounding communities: Carrboro, Cary, Cedar Grove, Chapel Hill, Durham, Efland, Greensboro, Mebane, Oxford, Raleigh, Rougemont and Roxboro. In addition, volunteers from farther away in the state include those from Boone, Charlotte, King and Sanford as well as volunteers from as far away as Annandale, Va.; Brooklyn, N.Y.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Kennett Square, Penn.; and Rochester, N.Y.

### **More Information**

- [Video on Stickwork in Hillsborough](#)
- [Map of Stickwork Site on Riverwalk](#)
- [Hillsborough Arts Council’s website](#)
- [Artist Patrick Dougherty’s website](#)
- [Town of Hillsborough’s Riverwalk webpage](#)

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